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human spirit,' and have essayed to promote its awakening. But even though one could arouse the human spirit from its lethargy, one can not see how this would help the absolute or break the cosmic slumbers of the 'Red King' in whose nightmare all are figures and must cut their willing or unwilling capers.

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REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS OF LITERATURE

Adonis, Attis, Osiris. Studies in the History of Oriental Religion. J. G. FRAZER. London and New York: The Macmillan Co. 1906. Pp. xvi + 339.

This is the second foretaste of the coming third edition of the 'Golden Bough,' and is, the author tells us, an expansion of the corresponding sections of the latter work.

As compared with the first series of studies destined to be incorporated in the new edition of the 'Golden Bough,' the 'Lectures on the Early History of the Kingship,' published last winter, the argument in the present volume is conducted with more reserve, and the conclusions are advanced with more caution. Mr. Frazer's thesis is that the oriental religions here studied are based upon harvest rites which were intended to insure the fertility of the soil by methods of imitative magic. In the 'Lectures on the Origin of the Kingship,' the author advanced the theory that the monarch of historical times is derived from the magician or medicine-man of tribal society, one of whose most important functions is to bring or avert rain, and otherwise control the fate of crops and herds. Eventually, however, the confidence in magical rites as effective to control climatic conditions was replaced by a belief in some more profound and mighty cause, manifesting its power in the changing aspects of nature. Not nature herself, but this *numen*, was now more or less responsive to petition and influence, and the worshippers 'now pictured to themselves the growth and decay of vegetation, the birth and death of living creatures, as effects of the waxing or waning strength of divine beings, of gods and goddesses, who were born and died, who married and begot children, on the pattern of human life' (p. 3). "Indeed they commonly believed that the tie between the animal and the vegetable world was even closer than it really is; hence they often combined the dramatic representation of reviving plants with a real or a dramatic union of the sexes for the purpose of furthering at the same time and by the same act the multiplication of fruits, of animals and of men" (p. 5). Accordingly, it is not unlikely that the kings of Byblus (the Mecca of the Phœnicians) assumed the title of Adonis or of Baal, and were required to mate with the goddess, the Baalath or Astarte of the city. If this were so, and Mr. Frazer's evidence, though slight, is very persuasive, it is clear that the king is the medicine-man enthroned, which is precisely the author's theory.

The chief deity of these religions of western Asia in their earlier stage would seem to have been a female deity—Astarte, Aphrodite. And Mr. Frazer believes that 'a great mother goddess, the personification of all the reproductive energies of nature, was worshipped under different names but with a substantial similarity of myth and ritual by many peoples of western Asia; that associated with her was a lover, or rather series of lovers, divine yet mortal, with whom she mated year by year, their commerce being deemed essential to the propagation of animals and plants, each in their several kinds; and further, that the fabulous union of the divine pair was simulated and, as it were, multiplied on earth by the real though temporary union of human sexes at the sanctuary of the goddess for the sake of thereby ensuring the fruitfulness of the ground and the increase of man and beast' (p. 23). This latter custom, which prevailed in Cyprus and in many parts of western Asia, was not regarded as an orgy of lust, but rather as the performance of a serious religious duty. Its fulfillment (with a stranger) was a necessary preliminary to marriage, and it seems natural to suppose, although Mr. Frazer has not suggested it, that this was the way to win the benediction of the goddess of motherhood. Women who became temple harlots, either for life or for a term of years, 'were invested with a sacred character, and their vocation, far from being deemed infamous, was probably long regarded by the laity as an exercise of more than common virtue' (p. 25).

In the present volume not so much is said about the periodical killing of the man who impersonated the divine consort. And the celebrated interpretation of the death of Christ is wholly omitted. The phenomenon of burning the god is, however, narrated at length. Thus is explained the tale of the death of Hercules, identified by the Greeks with the Tyrian Melcarth. "For on many a beach and headland of the *Ægean*, where the Phœnicians had their trading factories, the Greeks may have watched the bale-fires of Melcarth blazing in the darkness of night, and have learned with wonder that the strange foreign folk were burning their god" (p. 39).

Since the ritual of Adonis seems to have been intended to stimulate fertility, Adonis was himself evidently a spirit of increase through reproduction of kind, and, for a chiefly agricultural people, naturally a 'corn spirit.'

Attis 'was to Phrygia what Adonis was to Syria,' and appears to have been a 'tree spirit.' He was paired with Cybele, another goddess of fertility, and was honored in a ritual which, while it had evidently the same purpose as the rites of Adonis, was more primitive and barbaric.

It would seem as though the harvesting of the grain should bring satisfaction and hope, but the Egyptian farmer felt bound to put on an air of deep melancholy, to beat his breast and call upon Isis, whose task it was to bring back to life the slain god Osiris. Like Adonis and Attis, Osiris died and was mourned, rose from the dead, and brought joy and hope to his worshippers. His companion Isis was presumably in the beginning, like Astarte and Cybele, the more important deity, pointing thus to a stage of society in which descent was traced and property handed down through women. And the service of the god who rose annually

from the dead brought a promise of immortality to him who was initiated into the mystery.

Such a book as this ought to be of very great value to the student of the history of philosophy, for it was the blending of these eastern faiths with Neo-Platonism which formed the soil out of which Christianity arose. Mr. Frazer is always ready to insinuate the indebtedness of Christianity to this or that eastern cult. It is a real pity that he, or some one with his information, does not tell in detail the story of that indebtedness. There is much in the recent volumes of Professor Dill, but in his case doctrinal attachments seem to have stood in the way.

Mr. Frazer writes with rare literary skill. It is to him a matter of profound regret that he has been unable to visit the homes of the oriental religions here studied. The evidence in support of his conclusions is confessedly slight and often ambiguous, yet, as presented, it is surprisingly effective, and may well stimulate a lively interest in the coming edition of the 'Golden Bough.'

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Outline of the Vedānta System of Philosophy, according to Shankara.

PAUL DEUSSEN. Translated by J. H. WOODS and C. B. RUNKLE. New York: The Grafton Press. 1906. Pp. viii + 45.

This small volume is a translation of the outline of the doctrine of Shankara originally forming a part of Deussen's 'System des Vedānta.' Deussen's work on the Vedānta, now more than twenty years old, still, of course, remains authoritative; and the name of Dr. Woods, who has studied the Hindu systems with Deussen at Kiel as well as with native pundits in India, is a sufficient guaranty of the accuracy of the rendering both of the German and of the Sanskrit technical terms. It will be a convenience, especially to those who give university courses in Hindu philosophy, to have this compendium accessible in English; though it ought to be said that what we now most need from our competent specialists in the subject is not more material on the Shankaran form of the Vedānta, which has sufficiently and even redundantly been expounded in both English and German, but more translations of the texts and fuller studies of the reasonings of some of the less well-known systems of Indian thought. It would, for example, be a very useful thing if some one would prepare an English outline, similar to the present manual but somewhat fuller, of the Vedānta system of Rāmānuja—a species of 'concrete' idealistic monism that to most occidental minds must seem much more interesting than the sterile nihilism of Shankara, with its evasion of its own logical difficulties through the essentially frivolous and self-stultifying doctrine of Māyā. As a result of the Schopenhauerian enthusiasm of Deussen and of the propagandizing zeal of the Hindu disciples of the influential ascetic teacher Rāmakrishna, the extreme abstract version of the Vedāntic monism has come to enjoy an undue monopoly of attention, as the sole typical example of Indian pantheism and the only possible interpretation of the teaching of the Upanishads